

BETHINK YOURSELVES!

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“ Bethink Yourself ! ”

“This is your hour and the power of darkness.”
—Luke xii. 53.

By LEO TOLSTOY.

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BETHINK YOURSELVES!

CHAPTER I.

. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you, that He will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue muttereth wickedness. None sueth in righteousness, and none pleadeth in truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief and bring forth iniquity . . . their works are works of iniquity, and the act of violence is in their hands. Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood; their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; desolation and destruction are in their paths. The way of peace they know not; and there is no judgment in their goings; they have made themselves crooked paths; whosoever goeth therein doth not know peace. Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth righteousness overtake us: we look for light, but behold darkness, for brightness, but we walk in obscurity. We grope for the wall like the blind, yea, we grope as they that have no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the twilight; among them that are lusty we are as dead men."—Isaiah lix. 2-11.

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War is held in greater esteem than ever. An artist clever in this sphere, a murderer of genius, M. de Moltke, once answered some peace delegates in the following strange words:

"War is sacred, a Divine institution, it is one of the sacred laws of the world. It upholds all great and noble sentiments amongst men; honour, disinterestedness, virtue, courage, and, in a word, prevents them from falling into dreadful materialism."

Therefore to collect in herds of 400,000 men, to march day and night without rest, to think of nothing, nor study anything, nor learn anything, nor read anything, to be useful to nobody, to rot in dirt, to lie in the mire, to live like brutes in a continual stupefaction, to loot towns, burn villages, ruin nations, finally to meet another agglomeration of human flesh, to throw oneself upon it, to produce lakes of blood, plains of flesh piled up, bits of corpses mixed with earth, muddy and gory, to have one's arms or one's legs torn away, one's brain crushed—without profit to anyone, whilst one's old parents, one's wife and one's children perish from hunger—this is what is called not to fall into the most dreadful materialism! — GUY DE MAUPASSANT ("Sur l'Eau").

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We will restrict ourselves to reminding you that the different States of Europe have accumulated a debt of 130 milliards—(about 110 within the last century)—and that this colossal debt has arisen almost exclusively from the expenses of war; that in time of peace they maintain standing armies of 4,000,000 men, which they can increase to 19,000,000 in times of war; that two-thirds of their Budgets are absorbed by interest on these debts and by the maintenance of the land and sea forces.—G. DE MOLINARI (*"Esquisse de l'organisation politique et économique de la société future"*).

AGAIN war. Again sufferings, necessary to nobody, utterly uncalled for; again fraud, again the universal stupefaction and brutalisation of men.

Men who are separated from each other by thousands of miles, hundreds of thousands of such men (on the one hand, Buddhists, whose law forbids the killing, not only of men, but of animals; on the other hand, Christians, professing the law of brotherhood and love), like wild beasts, on land and on sea, are seeking out one another, in order to kill, torture, and mutilate each other in the most cruel way possible. What can this be? Is it a dream or a reality? Something is taking place which should not, cannot be; one longs to believe that it is a dream and to awake from it.

But no, it is not a dream, it is a dreadful reality! One could yet understand how a poor uneducated, defrauded Japanese, torn from his field and taught that Buddhism consists not in compassion to all that lives, but in sacrifices to idols, and how a similar poor illiterate fellow from the neighbourhood of Toula or Nijni Novgorod, who has been taught that Christianity consists in worshipping Christ, the Madonna, Saints, and their icons—one could understand how these unfortunate men, brought by the violence and deceit of centuries to recognise the greatest crime in the world—the murder of one's brethren—as a virtuous act, can commit these dreadful deeds, without regarding themselves as being guilty in so doing.

But how can so-called enlightened men preach

war, support it, participate in it, and, worst of all, without suffering the dangers of war themselves, incite others to it, sending their unfortunate defrauded brothers to fight? These so-called enlightened men cannot possibly ignore, I do not say the Christian law, if they recognise themselves to be Christians, but all that has been written, is being written, has and is being said, about the cruelty, futility and senselessness of war. They are regarded as enlightened men precisely because they know all this. The majority of them have themselves written and spoken about this. Not to mention the Hague Conference, which called forth universal praise, nor all the books, pamphlets, newspaper-articles, and speeches demonstrating the possibility of the solution of international misunderstandings by international arbitration—no enlightened man can help knowing that the universal competition in the armaments of states must inevitably lead them to endless wars or to a general bankruptcy, or else to both the one and the other. They cannot but know that besides the senseless, purposeless expenditure of milliards of roubles, *i.e.*, of human labour, on the preparations for war,—during the wars themselves millions of the most energetic and vigorous men perish in that period of their life which is best for productive labour (during the past century wars have destroyed 14,000,000 men). Enlightened men cannot but know that occasions for war are always such as are not worth not only one human life but not one hundredth part of all that which is spent upon wars (in fighting for the emancipation of the negroes much more was spent than it would have cost to redeem them from slavery).

Every one knows and cannot help knowing that, above all, wars, calling forth the lowest animal passions, deprave and brutalise men. Everyone knows the weakness of the arguments in favour of war, such as were brought forward by De Maistre,

Moltke, and others, for they are all founded on the sophism that in every human calamity it is possible to find an advantageous element, or else upon the utterly arbitrary assertion that wars have always existed and therefore always must exist, as if the bad actions of men could be justified by the advantages or the usefulness which they realise, or by the consideration that they have been committed during a long period of time. All so-called enlightened men know all this. Then suddenly war begins and all this is instantly forgotten, and the same men who but yesterday were proving the cruelty, futility, the senselessness of wars, now think, speak and write only about killing as many men as possible, about ruining and destroying the greatest possible amount of the productions of human labour, and about exciting as much as possible the passion of hatred in those peaceful, harmless, industrious men who by their labour feed, clothe, maintain these same pseudo-enlightened men—who compel them to commit those dreadful deeds contrary to their conscience, welfare or faith.

CHAPTER II.

And Micromégas spoke thus :

"Oh ! intelligent atoms in whom the Eternal Being has been pleased to manifest his art and power, you are probably tasting very pure joys on your globe, for having so little matter and appearing all spirit, you must be passing your life in loving and thinking ; that is the true life of spirits. I have nowhere seen true happiness, but doubtless it is here."

At this speech the philosophers shook their heads ; and one of them, more candid than the others, candidly confessed that if a small number of inhabitants, very lightly esteemed, are excepted, all the rest is an assemblage of insane, wicked, and unhappy men.

"If evil comes from matter," said he, "we have more matter than we require, and if evil comes from spirit we have too much spirit. For example, do you know that even while I am speaking to you there are a hundred thousand madmen of our race covered with hats who are killing a hundred thousand others covered with turbans, or who are being killed by the latter, almost all over the world. Such is the custom from time immemorial."

The Sirian shuddered and asked what might be the cause of these dreadful quarrels between such delicate beings.

"It concerns," said the philosopher, "a small quantity of mud about the size of your heel. It is not that any of these millions of men who get themselves slaughtered assert the slightest claim to this bit of mud. The question is merely to see whether it is to belong to a certain man called the *Sultan*, or to another man who is called, I don't know why, *Cesar*. Neither the one nor the other has ever seen or ever will see the little bit of land in question, and very few of these beings who are slaughtering each other have ever seen the being for whose interest he is getting murdered."

"Oh! unhappy ones," cried the Sirian indignantly, "can one imagine such excess of fury. I long to take three steps and crush with two kicks all this ant's nest of absurd assassins."

"Do not give yourself the trouble," was the answer; "they are sufficiently working out their own ruin. Besides, it is not they who should be punished, it is the easy-going barbarians who from the seclusion of their studies, after having well dined, order the massacre of a million men, and who get people solemnly to thank God for all this."—VOLTAIRE ("Micromégas," ch. vii.).

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The folly of modern wars is termed dynastic interests, nationality, European equilibrium, honour. This last motive is perhaps the most extravagant of all, as there does not exist a people in the world which has not been polluted by all crimes and covered with every shame. There is not one amongst them which has not borne all the humiliations which fortune can inflict upon a miserable troop of men. If, indeed, there still exist a sense of honour amongst nations, it is a strange method of supporting it by making war, i.e., committing all the crimes by which a civilian dishonours himself: arson, rape, outrage, murder. . . —ANATOLE FRANCE ("L'Orme du Mail").

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The savage instinct of murder-in-war has very deep roots in the human brain, because it has been carefully encouraged and cultivated for thousands of years. One likes to hope that a humanity superior to ours will succeed in correcting this original vice; but what will it then think of this civilisation calling itself refined, and of which we are so proud? Even as we now think of ancient Mexico and of its cannibalism, at one and the same time pious, warlike and bestial.—CH. LETOURNEAU ("L'évolution politique dans les diverses races humaines," Vol. I.).

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Sometimes out of fear one ruler attacks another in order that the latter should not fall upon him. Sometimes war is begun because the foe is too strong and sometimes because he is too weak; sometimes our neighbours desire our possessions, or they possess what we want. Then begins war, which lasts until they seize what they may require or surrender the possession which is demanded by us.—JONATHAN SWIFT ("Gulliver's Travels," Part IV., ch. 5).

Something is taking place incomprehensible and impossible in its cruelty, falsehood and stupidity. The Russian Tsar, the same man who exhorted all the nations in the cause of peace, publicly announces that, notwithstanding all his efforts to maintain the peace so dear to his heart (efforts which express themselves in the seizing of other peoples' lands and in the strengthening of armies for the defence of these stolen lands), ~~he~~, owing to the attack of the Japanese, commands that the same shall be done to the Japanese as they had commenced doing to the Russians, *i.e.*, that they should be slaughtered; and in announcing this call to murder he mentions God, asking the Divine blessing on the most dreadful crime in the world. The Japanese Emperor has proclaimed the same thing in relation to the Russians.

Men of science and of law (Messieurs Mouravief and Martens) strenuously try to prove that in the recent call of all nations to universal peace and the present incitement to war, because of the seizure of other peoples' lands, there is no contradiction. Diplomats in their refined French language publish and send out circulars in which they circumstantially and diligently prove (though they know no one believes them) that after all its efforts to establish peaceful relations (in reality after all its efforts to deceive other countries) the Russian Government has been compelled to have recourse to the only means for a rational solution of the question, *i.e.*, to the murder of men. The same thing is written by Japanese diplomatists. Scientists, historians, and philosophers, on their side, comparing the present with the past, deduct from these comparisons profound conclusions, and argue interminably about the laws of the movement of nations, about the relation between the Yellow and White races, or about Buddhism and Christianity, and on the basis of these deductions and arguments justify the slaughter of those belonging to the Yellow race

by Christians; while in the same way the Japanese scientists and philosophers justify the slaughter of those of the White race. Journalists without concealing their joy, try to outdo each other and, not hesitating at any falsehood however impudent and transparent, prove in all possible ways that the Russians only are right and strong and good in every respect, and that all the Japanese are wrong and weak and bad in every respect, and that all those are also bad who are inimical or may become inimical towards the Russians—the English, the Americans; and the same is proved likewise by the Japanese and their supporters in relation to the Russians.

Not to mention the military, who in the way of their profession prepare for murder, crowds of so-called enlightened people, such as professors, social reformers, students, nobles, merchants, without being forced thereto by anything or anyone, express the most bitter and contemptuous feelings towards the Japanese, the English, or the Americans, towards whom but yesterday they were either well disposed or indifferent, while, without the least compulsion, they express the most abject, servile feelings towards the Tsar (to whom, to say the least, they are completely indifferent), assuring him of their unlimited love and readiness to sacrifice their lives in his interests.

This unfortunate, entangled young man, recognised as the leader of 130,000,000 of people, continually deceived and compelled to contradict himself, confidently thanks and blesses the troops whom he calls his own for murder in defence of lands which with yet less right he also calls his own. All present to each other hideous icons in which not only no one amongst the educated believe, but which unlearned peasants are beginning to abandon—all bow down to the ground before these icons, kiss them and pronounce pompous and deceitful speeches in which no one really believes.

Wealthy people contribute insignificant portions of their immorally acquired riches for this cause of murder or the organisation of help in connection with the work of murder, while the poor from whom the Government annually collects two milliards, deem it necessary to do likewise, giving their mites also. The Government incites and encourages crowds of idlers who walk about the streets with the Tsar's portrait, singing, shouting hurrah! and who under pretext of patriotism are licenced in all kinds of excess. All over Russia, from the palace to the remotest village, the pastors of churches, calling themselves Christians, appeal to that God who has enjoined love to one's enemies—to the God of Love Himself—to help the work of the devil, to further the slaughter of men.

Stupefied by prayers, sermons, exhortations, by processions, pictures and newspapers, the food for powder,—hundreds of thousands of men, uniformly dressed, carrying divers deadly weapons, leaving their parents, wives, children, with hearts of agony but with artificial bravado—go where they, risking their own lives, will commit the most dreadful act of killing men whom they do not know and who have done them no harm. And they are followed by doctors and nurses who somehow imagine that at home they cannot serve simple peaceful suffering people but can only serve those who are engaged in slaughtering each other. Those who remain at home are gladdened by news of the murder of men, and when they learn that many Japanese have been killed they thank someone whom they call God.

All this is not only regarded as the manifestation of elevated feeling, but those who refrain from such manifestations—if they endeavour to disabuse men—are deemed traitors and betrayers, and are in danger of being abused and beaten by a brutalised crowd, which in defence of its insanity and cruelty can possess no other weapon than brute force.

CHAPTER III.

War organises a body of men who lose the feelings of the citizen in the soldier; whose habits detach them from the community; whose ruling passion is devotion to a chief; who are inured in the camp to despotic sway; who are accustomed to accomplish their ends by force, and to sport with the rights and happiness of their fellow-beings; who delight in tumult, adventure and peril; and turn with disgust and scorn from the quiet labours of peace. . . . It (war) tends to multiply and perpetuate itself without end. The successful nation, flushed by victory, pants for new laurels; whilst the humbled nation, irritated by defeat, is impatient to redeem its honour and repair its losses. . . .

The slaughter of thousands of fellow beings, instead of awakening pity, flushes them with delirious joy, illuminates the city, and dissolves the whole country in revelry and riot. Thus the heart of man is hardened. His worst passions are nourished. He renounces the bonds and sympathies of humanity.—CHANNING ("Discourse on War").

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Arrived at the age for military service one must submit to the arbitrary orders of a rascal or an ignoramus; one must recognise that the noblest and greatest act is to renounce having a will and to become the passive tool of another man's will; one must be ready to slash and to get oneself slashed; to suffer from hunger, thirst, rain, cold; to be mutilated without ever knowing why, and without any other compensation save a glass of brandy on the day of battle; and the promise of something impalpable and fictitious—immortality after death—and glory which is given or refused by a journalist in his comfortable room.

A gun is fired, the independent man falls wounded, his comrades nearly finish him off by trampling over him. He is buried half alive, and then he is free to enjoy immortality. His comrades, his parents forget him. The man to whom he had devoted his happiness, his sufferings, his very life, never knew him. And in the end a few years later they come to gather his whitened bones, out of which they make paint and English blacking for cleaning the boots of his General.—ALPHONSE KARR ("Sous les Tilleuls").

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They take a man in the bloom of his youth, they put a gun into his hands, a bag on his back, they adorn his head with a cockade, and then they tell him: "My brother of Prussia has wronged me; you must attack his subjects. I have informed them through my messenger, whom I call a herald, that on the 1st of April next you will have the honour of presenting yourself at the frontier in order to slaughter them. . . ."

"Perhaps at first you will think that our enemies are men; but I warn you they are not men, they are Prussians. You

will distinguish them from the human race by the colour of their uniform. Try to do your duty well, as I will be there seated on my throne observing you. If you gain the victory, when you return to France they will bring you to the windows of my palace. I will descend in full uniform and will say to you, 'Soldiers, I am satisfied with you.' . . . Should you remain on the battlefield (which may easily happen) I will communicate the news of your death to your family, that they may mourn over you, and that your brothers may inherit your share of things. If you lose an arm or a leg I will pay you what they are worth; but if you have the fortune or misfortune, however you like to call it, of escaping the bullet, then, when you no longer have strength to carry your bag I will dismiss you, and you can go and die where you like; that will no longer concern me."—CLAUDE TILLIER ("Mon oncle Benjamin").

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But I learnt discipline, namely, that the corporal is always right when he speaks to a soldier, the sergeant when he speaks to a corporal, the sub-lieutenant to the sergeant-major, and so on up to the Field-Marshal of France—were they even to say that twice two is five, or that the moon is shining at midday.

It is difficult to grasp this, but there is something which will greatly help you. It is a kind of notice stuck up in the barracks, and which is from time to time read to you in order to clear your ideas. This notice anticipates all that a soldier may have the desire to do; for instance to return to his village, to refuse the service, to resist his commander, etc., and all these end always in the same way by capital punishment or at least five years of penal servitude.—ERCKMANN-CHATRIAN ("Histoire d'un conscrit de 1813").

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I have bought the negro, he belongs to me. What harm do I do him? He works like a horse, I feed him badly, I clothe him in the same way, he is beaten when he disobeys—is there anything to surprise one in that? Do we treat our soldiers better? Have not they lost their liberty as completely as this negro? The only difference between the negro and the soldier is that the soldier costs less. A fine negro is now worth at least five hundred écus, a fine soldier costs hardly fifty. Neither the one nor the other may quit the place where he is confined. Both the one and the other are beaten for the slightest fault. Their salary is about the same; and the negro has this advantage over the soldier that he does not risk his life but passes it with his wife and children.—("Questions sur l'Encyclopédie, par des amateurs, Art. Esclavage").

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It is as if there had never existed either Voltaire, or Montaigne, or Pascal, or Swift, or Kant, or Spinoza, or hundreds of other writers who have exposed with great force the madness and futility of

war, and have described its cruelty, immorality and savagery, and, above all, it is as if there had never existed Jesus and his teaching of human brotherhood, and Love of God and of men.

One recalls all this to mind and looks around on what is now taking place, and one experiences horror less at the abominations of war than at that which is the most horrible of all horrors, the consciousness of the impotency of human reason.

That which alone distinguishes man from the animal, that which constitutes his dignity—his reason—is found to be an unnecessary and not only a useless but a pernicious addition which simply impedes action, like a bridle fallen from a horse's head and entangled in his legs and only irritating him.

It is comprehensible that a heathen, a Greek, a Roman, even a mediæval Christian, ignorant of the Gospel and blindly believing all the prescriptions of the Church, might fight, and fighting, pride himself on his military achievements; but how can a believing Christian, or even a sceptic involuntarily permeated by the Christian ideals of human Brotherhood and Love which have inspired the works of the philosophers, moralists, and artists of our time—how can such take a gun or stand by a cannon and aim at a crowd of his fellow men, desiring to kill as many of them as possible?

The Assyrians, Romans, or Greeks might be persuaded that in fighting they were acting not only according to their conscience, but even fulfilling a righteous deed. But whether we wish it or not we are Christians, and however Christianity may have been distorted, its general spirit cannot but lift us to that higher plane of reason whence we can no longer refrain from feeling with our whole being not only the senselessness and the cruelty of war but its complete opposition to all that we regard as good and right. Therefore we cannot do as they did, not only with assurance, firmness, and peace, but with-

out a consciousness of our criminality, without the desperate feeling of a murderer who, having begun to kill his victim and feeling in the depths of his soul the guilt of his act, proceeds to try to stupefy or infuriate himself to be able the better to complete his dreadful deed. All the unnatural, feverish, hot-headed, insane excitement which has now seized the idle upper ranks of Russian society is merely the symptom of their recognition of the criminality of the work which is being done. All these insolent, mendacious speeches about devotion to and worship of the monarch, about readiness to sacrifice life (or one should say, other people's lives and not one's own); all these promises to defend with one's breast land which does not belong to one; all these senseless benedictions of each other with various banners and monstrous icons; all these Te Deums; all these preparations of blankets and bandages; all these detachments of nurses; all these contributions to the fleet and to the Red Cross presented to the Government—whose direct duty is (whilst it has the possibility of collecting from the people as much money as it requires), having declared war, to organise the necessary fleet and necessary means for attending the wounded—all these Slavonic, pompous, senseless, and blasphemous prayers the utterance of which in various towns is communicated in the papers as important news; all these processions, calls for the national hymn, cheers; all this dreadful desperate newspaper mendacity which, being universal, does not fear exposure; all this stupefaction and brutalisation which has now taken hold of Russian society and which is being transmitted by degrees also to the masses—all this is only a symptom of the guilty consciousness of that dreadful act which is being accomplished.

Spontaneous feeling tells men that what they are doing should not be, but as the murderer who has begun to assassinate his victim cannot stop, so also

Russian people now imagine that the fact of the deadly work having been commenced is an unanswerable argument in favour of war. War has been begun and therefore it should go on. Thus it seems to simple, benighted, unlearned men acting under the influence of the petty passions and stupefaction to which they have been subjected. In exactly the same way the most educated men of our time argue to prove that man does not possess free will, and that therefore even were he to understand that the work he has commenced is evil he can no longer cease to do it.

And dazed,—brutalised men continue their dreadful work.

CHAPTER IV.

It is wonderful to see how, thanks to diplomacy and to the newspapers, an insignificant dispute may be transformed into a sacred war. When, in 1853, England and France declared war against Russia it was for so insignificant a reason that even by searching in the diplomatic Blue-books it is with great difficulty that one can discover it. . . . The death of 500,000 brave men, the expenditure of from five to six milliards, such were the consequences of this obscure conflict.

Yet after all motives did exist. But of what a shameful kind! Napoleon the Third wished, by an alliance with England and a successful war, to consolidate his dynasty and his power, of criminal origin. The Russians hoped to take possession of Constantinople. The English wished to assure the triumph of their commerce and to check Russia's supremacy in the East. Under one form or another it is always the spirit of conquest or of violence.—CHARLES RICHET ("Les guerres et la paix").

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The inhabitants of the planet Earth are as yet in such a state of unfitness, of unintelligence, and of stupidity that one sees the most civilised countries' daily papers naively reporting, without discussion, as a quite natural thing, the diplomatic arrangements which chiefs of states mutually agree upon, alliances against a supposed enemy—and preparations for war. Nations allow their chiefs to dispose of them like cattle, and to lead them to slaughter without seeming to realize that the life of every individual is his personal property . . .

The inhabitants of this singular planet have been reared in the notion that there are nations, frontiers, and standards. They have such a feeble sense of humanity that in every nation

it is completely effaced by the sense of the Fatherland It is quite true that if those who think wished to come to an agreement this situation would change, for individually no one desires war. . . . But there exist those political combinations which furnish livelihood for a legion of parasites:—**FLAMMARION** ("Les terres du ciel").

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When one studies, not superficially but fundamentally, the various channels in which human activity manifests itself one cannot avoid this sad reflection : How many lives are sacrificed for the perpetuation of the power of evil on earth instead of being employed in the effort to promote the power of righteousness, and in what a much greater proportion than any other institution do permanent armies contribute to this disorder.

One's astonishment and feelings of sadness increase when one considers that nothing of all this is necessary, and that the evil easily accepted as good by the immense majority of men is so merely through their stupidity in allowing themselves to be exploited by certain cleverly perverse men relatively very few in number:—**PATRICE LARROQUE** ("De la guerre et des armées permanentes").

Ask a soldier, a private, a corporal, a non-commissioned officer who has abandoned his old parents, his wife, his children, why he is preparing to kill men whom he does not know—he will at first be astonished at your question. He is a soldier, he has taken the oath, and it is his duty to fulfil the orders of his commanders. If you tell him that war, *i.e.*, the slaughter of men, does not conform to the command: "Thou shalt not kill," he will say, "And how if ours are attacked—for the King—for the Orthodox Faith?" (One of them said in answer to my question: "And how if he attacks that which is sacred?" "What do you mean?" I asked. "Why," said he, "the banner.") And if you endeavour to explain to such a soldier that God's Commandment is more important not only than the banner, but than anything else in the world, he will become silent or he will get angry and report you to the authorities.

Ask an officer, a general, why he goes to the war. He will tell you that he is a military man, and that

the military are indispensable for the defence of the Fatherland. As to murder not conforming to the spirit of the Christian law, this does not trouble him, as either he does not believe in this law, or if he does, it is not in the law itself but in that explanation which has been given to this law. But above all, he, like the soldier, in place of the personal question, what should he do himself, always puts the general question about the State, or the Fatherland. "At the present moment when the Fatherland is in danger one should act, and not argue," he will say.

Ask the diplomatists who by their deceits prepare wars, why they do it? They will tell you that the object of their activity is the establishment of peace between nations, and that this object is attained, not by ideal unrealisable theories, but by diplomatic action and readiness for war. And, just as the military, instead of the question concerning one's own action, place the general question, so also diplomatists will speak about the interests of Russia, about the unscrupulousness of other Powers, about the balance of power in Europe, but not about their own position and its activities.

Ask the journalists why, by their writings, they incite men to war, they will say that wars in general are necessary and useful, especially the present war, and they will confirm this opinion of theirs by misty patriotic phrases, and, just like the military and diplomatist, to the question why he, a journalist, a particular individual, a living man, acts in a certain way—he will speak about the general interests of the nation, about the State, civilisation, the White race. In the same way, all those who prepare war will explain their participation in that work. They will perhaps agree that it would be desirable to abolish war, but at present this is impossible. At present they as Russians and as men who occupy certain positions, such as

heads of the nobility, representatives of local self-government, doctors, workers of the Red Cross, are called upon to act and not to argue. "There is no time to argue and to think of oneself," they will say, "when there is a great common work to be done"; the same will be said by the Tsar, seemingly responsible for the whole thing. He, like the soldier, will be astonished at the question, "whether war is now necessary?" He does not even admit the idea that the war might yet be arrested. He will say that he cannot refrain from fulfilling that which is demanded of him by the whole nation, that although he does recognise that war is a great evil, and has used, and is ready to use all possible means for its abolition, in the present case he could not help declaring war, and cannot help continuing it. It is necessary for the welfare and glory of Russia.

Every one of these men, to the question why he, so-and-so, Ivan, Peter, Nicolas, whilst recognising as binding upon him the Christian law which not only forbids the killing of one's neighbour but demands that one should love and serve him—why he permits himself to participate in war, *i.e.*, in violence, loot, murder, will infallibly answer the same thing—that he is thus acting in the name of his Fatherland, or faith, or oath, or honour, or civilisation, or the future welfare of the whole of mankind; in general, of something abstract and indefinite. Moreover, these men are always so urgently occupied either by preparation for war, or by its organisation, or by discussions about it, that in their leisure time they can only rest from their labours, and have not time to occupy themselves with discussions about their life, regarding such discussions as idle.

CHAPTER V.

One's mind revolts at a catastrophe which appears in the opening century as the summit of the progress of our era, and yet one must get accustomed to it. For twenty years all the powers of knowledge have been exhausted in inventing engines of destruction, and soon a few cannon shots will suffice to destroy a whole army.

No longer, as formerly, several thousands of poor wretches whose blood was to be poured out have been put under arms, but whole nations are going to cut each other's throats. . . . And to prepare them for these massacres their hatred is excited by assurances that they are hated. And kind-hearted men allow themselves to be caught in this game, and we shall see furious troops of peaceful citizens who have been ordered to take up their guns, rush at each other with the ferocity of savage beasts—God knows for what ridiculous boundary incident or for what mercantile or colonial interest. They will march like sheep to the slaughter-house but knowing where they are going, knowing that they have left their wives, knowing that their children must be hungry, and yet eager and giddy under the loud-sounding and deceitful words sounded into their ears. They march without revolt, passive and resigned, whereas they represent the mass and the force, and they could—if they knew how to come to an agreement—establish common-sense and fraternity in place of the savage frauds of diplomacy. . . . They will march trampling on the harvests which they have sown, burning the towns which they have built—and all this with enthusiastic songs, joyful cries and festive music.—E. Ron ("Les sens de la vie").

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An eye-witness relates what he saw upon stepping on to the deck of the "Variag" during the present Russo-Japanese War. The sight was dreadful. Everywhere blood, morsels of flesh, trunks without heads, detached hands, the smell of blood from which even the most accustomed were sick. The conning-tower had suffered most—a shell had exploded over it and had killed a young officer who was directing the laying of the guns, all that remained of the unfortunate man was a clenched hand holding an instrument; of four men who were with the captain two were blown to pieces, the other two were severely wounded (they had both legs amputated and then again higher up), the captain escaped with only the splinter of a shell striking him in the head.

Nor is this all. Neutral ships cannot give refuge to the wounded because gangrene and fever are infectious.

Gangrene and suppurating hospital infections, together with hunger, fire, ruin, diseases, typhus, small-pox—are also part of military glory. Such is war. Nevertheless Joseph Maistre thus sang the praises of beneficent war:—that when the human soul loses its elasticity owing to effeminacy, becomes unbelieving and adopts the rotten vices which follow the superfluity of civilisation, it can be re-established only in blood.

M. Vogué, the academician, and M. Brunetiere say almost the same thing.

But the poor fellows out of whom cannon-flesh is composed have a right not to agree with all this.

Unfortunately they have not got the courage of their opinions. From this comes all the mischief. Accustomed for ages to see their kind killed over questions they do not understand they continue to do this, believing that all is well.

This is why troops are now lying there under the water being eaten by sea-crabs.

When grape-shot was demolishing all around them they can hardly have consoled themselves by the thought that this was being done for their welfare and in order to re-establish the soul of their contemporaries which had lost its elasticity from a superfluity of civilisation!

The unfortunate men probably had not read Joseph Maistre. I advise the wounded to read him between two dressings.

They will learn that war is as necessary as the executioner, because like him it is a manifestation of the justice of God.

This great idea may serve them as consolation while the surgeons saw their bones!—HARDOUIN.

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In the "Russian News" I read an argument as to Russia's advantage consisting in her having an inexhaustible store of human material.

For children whose father is killed, for a wife whose husband is killed, for a mother whose son is killed—this material is quickly exhausted.—(From the private letter of a Russian mother, March, 1904).

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You ask whether war amongst civilised nations is still required by historical conditions, by human rights, by progress?

I answer that not only is it no longer required, but that it has never been so required, never. It has always vitiated the historical development of humanity, violated human rights, and arrested progress.

Doubtless some wars have been followed by results apparently advantageous to general civilisation, but the pernicious consequences of these same wars have always greatly overbalanced these seemingly beneficial ones. The reason why people are still caught in this error is that only a part of these pernicious consequences are immediately apparent, the others, which are often much more serious, are indirect and have therefore for a long time escaped human intelligence. . . . If we concede to the advocates of war this simple little word, "still," we authorise them to say that the discussion between them and us is merely an affair of expediency, of personal appreciation; for this discussion would then be reduced to this, that we believe war "to have become unnecessary," whereas they judge it to be "still necessary." Under these circumstances they readily concede to us that it may become unnecessary or even harmful . . . after they have had time to inflict upon nations several formidable bleedings in order to satisfy personal ambitions.

For such has been in all times and such continues to be the

unique function of war—to insure to a small number of men power, honour, riches, at the expense of the masses whose natural credulity these men exploit, along with the prejudices created and upheld by themselves.—CAPITAINE GASTON MOCH (“L’Ere sans violence : Revision du traite de Francfort”).

Men of our Christian world and of our time are like a man who, having missed the right turning, the further he goes the more he becomes convinced that he is going the wrong way. Yet the greater his doubts the quicker and the more desperately does he hurry on, consoling himself with the thought that he will arrive somewhere. But the time comes when it becomes quite clear that the way along which he is going will lead to nothing but a precipice, which he is already beginning to discern before him.

In such a position stands the Christian humanity of our time. It is perfectly evident that if we continue to live as we are now living, guided in our private lives, as well as in the life of separate states, by the sole desire of welfare for ourselves and for our state, and will, as we now do, think to ensure this welfare by violence, then, inevitably increasing the means of violence of one against the other and of state against state, we will firstly, keep ruining ourselves more and more, transferring the major portion of our productiveness to armaments; and secondly, by killing in mutual wars the best physically-developed men, we must become more and more degenerate and morally depraved.

That this will be the case if we do not alter our life is as certain as it is mathematically certain that two non-parallel straight lines must meet. But besides this being theoretically certain in our time, it is becoming certain not only to the mind, but also to the consciousness. The precipice towards which we approach is already becoming apparent to us and the most simple non-philosophising and uneducated men cannot but see that by

arming oneself more and more against each other and slaughtering each other in war, we, like spiders in a jar, can come to nothing else but the destruction of each other.

A sincere, serious, rational man can no longer console himself by the thought that matters can be mended, as was formerly supposed, by a universal empire such as that of Rome, or of Charles the Great, or Napoleon, or by the mediæval spiritual power of the Pope, or by sacred alliances, by the political balance of the European concert and by peaceful international tribunals, or as some have thought, by the increase of military strength, and the newly-discovered powerful weapons of destruction.

It is impossible to organise a universal empire or republic consisting of European states, as different nationalities will never desire to unite into one state. To organise international tribunals for the solution of international disputes? But who will impose obedience to the decision of the tribunal upon a contending party possessing an organised army of millions of men. To disarm? No one desires nor will begin to do so. To invent yet more dreadful means of destruction—balloons with bombs filled with suffocating gases, shells which men will shower upon each other from above? Whatever may be invented, all states will furnish themselves with similar weapons of destruction. And the food for powder—as after cold weapons it submitted to bullets and meekly exposed itself to shells, bombs, far-reaching guns, mitrailleuses, mines—so it will also submit to bombs charged with suffocating gases scattered down upon it from balloons.

Nothing shows more evidently than the speeches of M. Mouravief and Professor Martens about the Japanese war not contradicting the Hague Peace Conference—nothing shows more obviously than these speeches—to what an extent, amongst the

men of our time, the means for the transmission of thought—speech—is distorted and how the capacity for clear rational thinking is completely lost. Thought and speech are used for the purpose not of serving as a guide for human activity, but of justifying any activity, however criminal it may be. The late Boer war, and the present Japanese war, which can at any moment pass into an universal slaughter, have proved this beyond all doubt. All anti-military discussions can as little contribute to the cessation of war as the most eloquent and persuasive considerations addressed to fighting dogs as to its being more advantageous to divide the piece of meat over which they are struggling than to mutilate each other and lose the piece, which will be carried away by some passing dog not joining in the fight. We are dashing on towards a precipice, cannot stop, and are approaching its edge.

To every rational man who reflects upon the position in which humanity is now placed and upon that which it is inevitably approaching, it cannot but be obvious that there is no practical issue out of this position, that one cannot devise any combination or organisation which would save us from the destruction towards which we are inevitably rushing.

Not to mention the economical problems which become more and more complex, mutual relations between the states arming themselves against each other and at any moment ready to break out into wars, clearly point to the certain destruction towards which all so-called civilised humanity is being carried.

Then, what is to be done?

CHAPTER VI.

Towards the close of His mission Jesus proclaims a new society and fixes its foundations. Before Him, nations were the possession of one or several masters, and belonged to these like so many herds. Everywhere the tyrannical domination of a few, and the servitude of the rest oppressed in the name of Force or under the insolent pretext of Superiority of Nature. Princes and grandees crushed the world with all the weight of their pride and their rapacity. Then Jesus comes to put an end to this extreme disorder; He comes to lift the bowed-down heads; to emancipate these multitudes of slaves; He teaches them that, equal before God, men are free in regard to each other; that no one has any intrinsic power over his brothers; that equality, and liberty, these divine laws of the human race, are inviolable; that power henceforth can no longer be regarded as a right; that it must depend on the association which delegates to it a function, a service, a devotion, a kind of slavery accepted by love in view of the welfare of all. Such is the society which Jesus commands His disciples to establish amongst themselves.

Is this society as it now exists? Is it this doctrine which reigns on earth? Has it conquered the Gentiles? Are the rulers of nations the servants or the masters of the latter? Oh! Christ, it is eighteen centuries since your mouth proclaimed these sacred maxims, since you sealed them with your blood; for eighteen centuries generations are transmitting them from one to another, they say they believe them; and yet what has changed in the world? The nations, succumbing and suffering, still await the promised deliverance. It is not, oh! Christ, that your word is deceitful or inefficacious, but the nations who pretend to its accomplishment either have not understood that it has to be accomplished by themselves, by their persevering efforts, by their insistent will; or else, broken down by their misery they have been wanting in what alone assures triumph, the courage of passive resistance and of death. But they will awake; something is already moving within them; they have heard, as it were, a voice in the air, which cries "Salvation draws near."—LAMENNAIS ("Les Evangiles").

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To the glory of humanity it must be said that the nineteenth century tends to approach a new path; it has learned that laws and tribunals should exist for nations, and that the crimes committed by nations against nations are not, because accomplished on a larger scale, less hateful than crimes committed amongst individuals.—QUETLET.

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You are one in origin, one in the law that governs you, and one in the goal you are destined to attain.

Your faith must be one, your actions one, and one the banner under which you contend. Acts, tears, and martyrdoms form a language common to all men, and which all men understand.—J. MAZZINI.

No, I appeal to the revolt of the conscience of every man who has seen or made the blood of his fellow citizens to flow; it is not enough that one single head should carry a burden so heavy as that of so many murders; as many heads as there are combatants would not be too many. In order to be responsible for the law of blood which they execute it would be just that they should at least have understood it. But the best organisations which I advocate would in themselves be only temporary; for, I repeat once more, that armies and war will only last awhile; as, notwithstanding the words of a sophist which I have elsewhere controverted, it is not true that even against the foreigner war is *divine*; it is not true that *the earth is thirsting for blood*. War is cursed of God and even of those men who make it and who have a secret horror of it; and the earth cries to heaven praying for fresh water in its rivers and for pure dew.—ALFRED DE VIGNY ("Grandeurs et servitudes militaires").

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Man is not more made to coerce than to obey. From these two inverse habits the races are inversely depraved. Here stultification, there insolence, nowhere true human dignity.—CONSIDÉRANT ("Les Quatre Crédits").

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If my soldiers were to begin to reflect not one of them would remain in the ranks.—FREDERICK THE SECOND.

Two thousand years ago John the Baptist, and then Jesus, said to men: "The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand (*verhovets*), bethink yourselves and believe in the Gospel" (Mark i. 15); "and if you do not bethink yourselves you will all perish" (Luke xiii. 5).

But men did not listen to them, and the destruction they foretold is already near at hand. And we men of our time cannot but see it. We are already perishing, and therefore we cannot leave unheeded that—old in time, but for us new—means of salvation. We cannot but see that besides all the other calamities which flow from our bad and irrational life, military preparations alone and the wars inevitably growing from them must infallibly destroy us. We cannot but see that all the means invented by men for escape from these evils are found, and must be found, to be ineffectual, and that the disastrous position of the nations arming themselves

against each other cannot but go on advancing continually. And therefore the words of Jesus refer to us and our time more than to any time or to any one.

Jesus said, "Bethink yourselves," *i.e.*, "Let every man interrupt the work he has begun and ask himself: Who am I? Whence have I appeared, and in what consists my destination? And, having answered these questions, according to the answer decide whether that which thou doest is in conformity with thy destination." And every man of our world and time, that is, being acquainted with the essence of the Christian teaching, needs only for a minute to interrupt his activity, to forget the capacity in which he is regarded by men, be it of emperor, soldier, minister, or journalist, and seriously ask himself who he is and what is his destination—in order to begin to doubt the utility, lawfulness, and reasonableness, of his activity. "Before I am emperor, soldier, minister, or journalist," must say to himself every man of our time and of the Christian world, "before any of these I am a man, *i.e.*, an organic being sent by the Higher Will into a universe endless in time and space, in order, after staying in it for an instant, to die, *i.e.*, to disappear from it. And therefore all those personal, social, and even universal human aims which I may place before myself and which are placed before me by men, are all insignificant owing to the shortness of my life, as well as to the boundlessness of the life of the universe, and should be subordinated to that higher aim, for the attainment of which I am sent into the world. This ultimate aim, owing to my limitations, is inaccessible to me, but it does exist (as there must be a purpose in all that exists), and my business is that of being its tool, *i.e.*, my destination is that of being a workman of God, of fulfilling His work." And having understood this destination, every man of our world and time, from emperor to soldier, cannot but regard differently those duties which he

has taken upon himself or which other men have imposed upon him.

"Before I was crowned, recognised as Emperor," must the Emperor say to himself, "before I undertook to fulfil the duties of the head of the state, I, by the very fact that I live, have promised to fulfil that which is demanded of me by the Higher Will that sent me into life. These demands I not only know, but feel in my heart. They consist, as it is expressed in the Christian law, which I profess, in that I should submit to the will of God, and fulfil that which it requires of me, that I should love my neighbour, serve him and act towards him as I would wish others to act towards me. Am I doing this,—by ruling men, prescribing violence, executions, and the most dreadful of all—wars?"

"Men tell me that I ought to do this. But God says that I ought to do something quite different. And therefore, however much I may be told that, as the head of the state, I must direct acts of violence, the levying of taxes, executions, and, above all, war—that is, the slaughter of one's neighbour—I do not wish to and cannot do these things."

So must say to himself the soldier, who is taught that he must kill men, and the minister, who deemed it his duty to prepare for war, and the journalist who incited to war, and every man, who puts to himself the question, who is he, what is his destination in life? And the moment the head of the state will cease to direct war, the soldier to fight, the minister to prepare means for war, the journalist to incite thereto,—then, without any new institutions, adaptations, balance of power, tribunals, there will of itself be destroyed that hopeless position in which men have placed themselves, not only in relation to war, but also to all other calamities which they themselves inflict upon themselves.

So that, however strange this may appear, the

most effective and certain deliverance of men from all the calamities which they inflict upon themselves, and from the most dreadful of all—war—is attainable not by any external general measures, but merely by that simple appeal to the consciousness of each separate man, which one thousand nine hundred years ago was proposed by Jesus—that every man bethink himself, and ask himself who is he, why he lives, and what he should and should not do?

CHAPTER VII.

There is a wide-spread impression abroad that religion may not be a permanent element in human nature. Many are telling us that it is a phase of thought, of feeling, of life, peculiar to the early and comparatively uncultivated stages of man's career; that it is something which the civilised man will progressively outgrow, and at last leave behind. . . . I do not think we need be specially troubled over this problem. We ought to be able to look at it dispassionately, because, if religion is only superstition, why then, of course, it ought to be outgrown. . . . If, on the other hand, religion be divine, if it be essential to the highest and noblest human life, why then criticism and question will only verify this fact. . . . If you find some mark on the coin, if you find it on every one of the coins, you feel perfectly certain that there is some reality in the die that stamps the coin, that accounts for that mark. It was not there for nothing: it did not simply happen.

So wherever you find any universal or permanently characteristic quality in human nature, or any other nature for that matter, you may feel perfectly certain that there is something in the universe that is real, that corresponds to it, that called it out, that made it.

You find man, then, universally a religious being. You find him everywhere believing that he is fronted with an invisible universe. On any theory you choose to hold of this universe, it has made us what we are; and there must be—unless the universe is a lie—a reality corresponding to that which is universal and permanent and real in ourselves, because this universe has called these things into being, has made them what they are.—**SAVAGE** ("The Passing and the Permanent in Religion").

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The religious element contemplated from that elevated standpoint becomes thus the highest and noblest factor in man's education, the greatest potency in his civilisation; while effete creeds and political selfishness are the greatest obstacles to human advance. State-craft and priest-craft are the very oppo-

site of religion. . . . Our study here has shown the religious substance everywhere to be identical, eternal and divine, permeating the human heart wherever it throbs, feels and meditates. . . . The logical result of our researches all pointing to the identical basis of the great religions, to the one doctrine unfolding since the dawn of humanity to this day. . . . Deep at the bottom of all the creeds flows the stream of the one eternal revelation, *the one religion*, the "word of God to the mind of man."

Let the Parsee wear his *taavids*, the Jew his *phylacteries*, the Christian his cross, and the Moslem his crescent; but let them all remember that these are forms and emblems, while the practical essence is, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" equally emphasised and accentuated by Manu, Zoroaster, Buddha, Abraham, Moses, Socrates, Hillel, Jesus, Paul, Mohammed.—MAURICE FLEUGEL ("The Zend-Avesta and Eastern Religions.")

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No true society exists without common faith and common purpose, politics are their application, religion gives their principle. Where this common faith is not, the mere will of the majority means permanent instability and the oppression of the rest. Without God you can coerce, but you cannot persuade; you may be tyrants in your turn but you cannot be educators or apostles. What we want, what the people want, what the age is crying for—that it may find an issue from this slough of selfishness and doubt and negation—is a faith, a faith in which our souls, ceasing to wander in search of individual ends, may march together in the consciousness of one origin, one law, one goal.

All humanity repeats under different formulas and in different degrees the word of the Lord's Prayer of Christendom: Thy kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven.—MAZZINI.

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Man may regard himself as an animal amongst animals, living from day to day; he may regard himself as a member of a family or of a society or of a nation living from century to century; he may, and even necessarily he must (because his reason irresistibly attracts him to this), regard himself as a part of the whole Infinite Universe existing infinitely. Therefore a rational man . . . always establishes, besides his relation to his immediate circumstances, his relation to the whole universe, infinite in time and space, and conceived as a whole. This establishment by man of his relation to that whole of which he feels himself a part, and from which he obtains guidance for his actions, is precisely what was and is called Religion. Therefore religion always has been, and cannot cease to be, an indispensable and permanent condition of the life of a rational man and of rational humanity

True Religion is the establishment by man of such a relation to the Infinite Life around him as connects his life with this Infinity and directs his conduct.—LEO TOLSTOY ("What is Religion?").

Religion (regarded objectively) is the recognition of all our duties as the commands of God . . .

There is only one true religion although there may be different faiths.—KANT.

The evil from which men of our time are suffering is produced by the fact that the majority live without that which alone affords a rational guidance for human activity—without religion,—not that religion which consists in belief in dogmas, in the fulfilment of rites affording a pleasant diversion, consolation, stimulant, but that religion which establishes the relation of man to the All, to God, and therefore gives a general higher direction to all human activity, and without which people stand on the plane of animals, and even lower than they. This evil, which is leading men to inevitable destruction, has manifested itself with special power in our time, because, having lost all rational guidance in life, and having directed all efforts to discoveries and improvements principally in the sphere of technical knowledge, men of our time have developed in themselves enormous power over the forces of nature; but, not having any guidance for the rational adaptation of this power, they naturally have used it for the satisfaction of their lowest and most animal propensities.

Bereft of religion, men possessing enormous power over the forces of nature are like children to whom powder, or explosive gas, has been given as a plaything. Considering this power which men of our time possess, and the way they use it, one feels that, in view of the degree of their moral development, men have no right, not only to the use of railways, steam, electricity, telephones, photography, wireless telegraphs, but even to the simple art of manufacturing iron and steel, as all these improvements and arts they use only for the satisfaction of their lusts, for amusement, dissipation, and the destruction of each other.

Then what is to be done? To reject all these improvements of life, all this power acquired by humanity? To forget that which it has learnt? This is impossible; however harmfully these mental acquisitions are used, still they are acquisitions, and men cannot forget them. To alter those combinations of nations which have been formed during centuries, and to establish new ones? To invent such new institutions as would hinder the minority from deceiving and exploiting the majority? To disseminate knowledge? All this has been tried, and is being done with great fervour. All these imaginary methods of improvement represent the chief methods of self-distractedness, and of diverting one's attention from the consciousness of inevitable perdition. The boundaries of states are changed, institutions are changed, knowledge is disseminated, but within other boundaries, with other organisations, with increased knowledge, men remain the same beasts, ready at any minute to tear each other to pieces, or the same slaves they have always been and always will be, while they continue to be guided, not by religious consciousness, but by passions, theories, and external influences.

Man has no choice; he must be the slave of the most unscrupulous and insolent amongst slaves, or else the servant of God, because for man there is only one way of being free—by uniting his will with the will of God. People bereft of religion, some repudiating religion itself, others recognising as religion those external, monstrous forms which have superseded it, and, guided only by their personal lusts, fear, human laws, and, above all, by mutual hypnotism, cannot cease to be animals or slaves, and no external efforts can extricate them from this state, for only religion makes a man free.

And most of the people of our time are deprived of it.

CHAPTER VIII.

Do not that which thy conscience condemns, and say not that which does not agree with truth. Fulfil this, the most important duty, and thou wilt have fulfilled all the object of thy life.

No one can coerce thy will, it is accessible neither to thief nor robber; desire not that which is unreasonable, desire general welfare and not personal as do the majority of men. The object of life is not to be on the side of the majority, but to escape finding oneself in the ranks of the insane . . .

Remember that there is a God who desires not praise nor glory from men created in His image, but rather that they, guided by the understanding given them, should in their actions become like unto Him. A fig tree is true to its purpose, so is the dog, so are also bees. Then is it possible that man shall not fulfil his destination? But, alas, these great and sacred truths vanish from thy memory; the bustle of daily life, war, unreasonable fear, spiritual debility, and the habit of being a slave, obstruct them . . .

A small branch cut from the main branch thereby has become separated from the whole tree. A man in enmity with another man is severed from the whole of mankind. But a branch is cut off by another's hand, whereas man estranges himself from his neighbour by hatred and spite, without, it is true, knowing that thereby he tears himself away from the whole of mankind. But the Divinity having called man as brothers into common life has endowed them with the freedom of becoming reconciled to each other after dissension.—MARCUS AURELIUS.

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Enlightenment is the escape of man from his own childishness which he himself maintains. The *childishness* consists in his incapacity of making use of his reason without another's guidance. *He himself maintains this childishness* when it is the result of the insufficiency not of reason but of the decision and manliness of using it without another's guidance. "Sapere aude!"

Have the manliness to use thine own reason. This is the motto of enlightenment.—KANT.

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One must extricate that religion which has Jesus for its object. And when we have laid our finger upon that state of conscience, which is the original cell, the principle of the eternal Gospel, we must stick to it. As the faint illuminations of a village festival, or the miserable candles of a procession, disappear before the great marvel of the sun, so also little local miracles, weak and doubtful, will disappear before the law of the world of the Spirit, before the incomparable spectacle of human history conducted by the all powerful dramatist who is called God.—AMIEL ("Fragments d'un journal intime").

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I recognise the following proposition as needing no proof: all

by which man thinks he can please God, save a righteous life, is merely religious error and superstition.—KANT.

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In reality there is only one means of worshipping God—it is by the fulfilment of one's duties and by behaviour in accordance with the laws of reason.—LICHTENBERG.

"But in order to abolish the evil from which we are suffering," those will say who are preoccupied by various practical activities, "it would be necessary that not a few men only, but all men, should bethink themselves, and that having done so, they should uniformly understand the destination of their lives in the fulfilment of the will of God and in the service of one's neighbour." Is this possible?

Not only possible, do I answer, but it is impossible that this should not take place.

It is impossible for men not to bethink themselves, i.e., impossible that each man should not put himself the question as to who he is, and wherefore he lives; for man, as a rational being, cannot live without seeking to know why he lives, and he has always put to himself this question, and always, according to the degree of his development, has answered it in his religious teaching. In our time, the inner contradiction in which men feel themselves elicits this question with special insistence and demands an answer. It is impossible for men of our time to answer this question otherwise than by recognising the law of life in love to men and in the service of them, this being for our time the only rational answer as to the meaning of human life, and this answer one thousand nine hundred years ago has been expressed in the Christian religion and is likewise known to the vast majority of all mankind.

This answer in a latent state lives in the consciousness of all men of the Christian world of our time, but it does not openly express itself and serve as guidance for our life; only because, on the one

hand, those who enjoy the greatest authority, so-called scientists—being under the coarse error that religion is a temporary and outgrown step in the development of mankind and that men can live without religion—inculcate this error on those of the masses who are beginning to be educated; and on the other hand, because those in power sometimes consciously, but often unconsciously (being under the error that the Church faith is Christian religion), endeavour to support and excite in the people crude superstitions given out as the Christian religion.

If only these two deceptions were to be destroyed, then true religion, already latent in men of our time, would become evident and obligatory.

To bring this about it is necessary that on the one hand, men of science should understand that the principle of the brotherhood of all men and the rule of not doing unto others what one does not wish for oneself is not one casual idea out of a multitude of human theories which can be subordinated to any other considerations, but is an incontestable principle, standing higher than the rest, and flowing from the changeless relation of man to that which is eternal—to God—and is religion, all religion, and therefore always obligatory.

On the other hand, it is necessary that those who consciously or unconsciously preach crude superstitions under the guise of Christianity should understand that all these dogmas, sacraments, and rites, which they support and preach, are not only, as they think, harmless, but are in the highest degree pernicious, concealing from men that central religious truth which is expressed in the fulfilment of God's will—in the service of men—and that the rule of acting towards others as one would wish others to act towards oneself is not one of the prescriptions of the Christian religion but is the whole of practical religion as, indeed, is stated in the Gospels.

To bring about that men of our time should uni-

formly place before themselves the question of the meaning of life, and uniformly answer it, it is only necessary that those who regard themselves as enlightened should cease to think and to inculcate upon other generations that religion is atavism, the survival of a past wild state, and that for the good life of men the spreading of education is sufficient, *i.e.*, the spread of the most varied knowledge which is in some way to bring men to justice and to a moral life. These men should understand instead that for the good life of humanity religion is vital, and that this religion already exists and lives in the consciousness of the men of our time. Men who are intentionally and unintentionally stupefying the people by Church superstitions should cease to do so, recognising that what is important and binding in Christianity is not baptism, nor communion, nor profession of dogmas, etc., but only love to God and to one's neighbour, and the fulfilling of the commandment of acting towards others as one wishes others to act towards oneself, and that in this lies all the law and the prophets.

If only both pseudo-Christians and men of science understood and preached to children and to the uneducated these simple, clear and necessary truths, as they now preach their complicated, confused, and unnecessary theories, all men would uniformly understand the meaning of their lives and recognise one and the same duties as flowing from this meaning.

CHAPTER IX.

From the story of a Russian peasant who refused Military Service:—

On October 15th, of 1895, I was called for the Conscription. When my turn came to draw the lot, I said that I would not do so. The officials looked at me, then consulted each other, and asked me why I refused.

I answered that it was because I was not going either to take the oath nor to carry a gun.

They said that that would be seen to later on, but now I must draw the lot.

I again refused. Then they told the village starosta to draw the lot. He did so; the number 674 came out. It was written down.

The military commander entered, he called me into his office and asked: Who has taught thee all this, that thou dost not wish to take the oath?

I answered: I myself learnt it by reading the Gospel.

He said: I do not think that thou hast thyself so understood the Gospel, everything there is incomprehensible, in order to understand it one has to learn a lot.

To this I said: That Jesus did not teach anything incomprehensible, for even the simplest illiterate people can understand his teaching . . .

Then he told a soldier to take me to the barracks. With the soldier I went to the kitchen and there we dined.

After dinner they asked me why I had not taken the oath.

I said: Because in the Gospel it is said, "Swear not at all."

They were astonished. Then they asked: But is that really in the Gospel? Well then, find it.

I found the passage, read it, they listened.

Although it is there, they said, still one cannot refuse the oath because one would be tortured to death.

I said: Who loses his earthly life will inherit eternal life.

On the 20th I was placed in a row with other young soldiers and the military rules were explained to us. I told them that I would fulfil nothing of this. They asked why.

I said: Because as a Christian I will not bear arms nor defend myself from enemies, for Christ commanded us to love even our enemies.

They said: But art thou alone a Christian? Why, we are all Christians. I said: About others I know nothing, I only know concerning myself that Jesus said that I should do as I am now doing. He again said: If thou wilt not drill I will let thee rot in prison.

To this I said: What ye will that do with me, but serve I will not . . .

To-day a commission examined me. The General said to the officers: What views has this suckling acquired that he refuses service? Millions serve whereas he alone refuses. He ought to be flogged, then he will change his views. . . .

Olhovik was transported to the Amur. On the steamer all observed Lent, he refused. The soldiers asked why. He explained. The soldier Sereda entered into the conversation. Olhovik opened the Gospel and began to read the fifth chapter of Matthew. Having read it he said: Thus Jesus forbids the oath, courts of justice, and war, but amongst us all this takes place and is regarded as legitimate. A crowd of soldiers had collected around them and they remarked that Sereda had no cross on his neck. They asked him: And where is thy cross?

He said: In my box.

They again asked: But why dost thou not wear it on thy neck?

He said : Because I love Jesus and therefore cannot wear that on which he was crucified.

Then entered two non-commissioned officers, and began talking with Sereda. They said to him : How is it that not long ago thou didst observe Lent, yet now hast taken off thy cross ?

He answered thus : Because then I was in the dark and did not see the light, whereas now I have begun to read the Gospel and have learnt that a Christian should not do all this.

They again asked : Does this mean that like Olhovik thou also wilt not serve ?

He said that he would not.

They asked why.

He said : Because I am a Christian, and Christians must not take arms against men.

Sereda was arrested, and together with Olhovik exiled to the province of Yakoutsck, where they now are.

* * * * *

On January the 27th of 1894, in the Voronej prison hospital there died from pneumonia a certain man named Drojzin, formerly a village teacher of the Government of Koursk. His body was thrown into a grave in the prison cemetery, as is done with the bodies of all the criminals who die in the prison. Yet he was one of the saintliest, purest and most truthful men who have ever lived.

In August, 1891, he was called to the Conscription, but regarding all men as brothers, and recognising murder and violence as the greatest sins, contrary to conscience and to the will of God, he refused to be a soldier and to bear arms. Also regarding it as a sin to surrender his will unto the power of other men, who are liable to demand evil actions of him, he refused to take the oath. Those men whose life is founded on violence and murder at first condemned him for one year to solitary confinement in Harkof, but later he was transferred to the Voronej penal battalion, where during fifteen months he was tortured by cold, hunger, and solitary confinement. Finally, when from incessant sufferings and privations, consumption developed and he was recognised as unfit for military service he was transferred to the civil prison, where he was to remain confined for nine years more. But while he was being transferred from the penal battalion to the prison during an extremely frosty day, the police officials, owing to their negligence, omitted to furnish him with a warm coat. The party remained for several hours in the street in front of the police station, and thus caused him to catch cold. Pneumonia set in, from which he died in twenty-two days.

The day before his death Drojzin told the doctor, "Although I have not lived long, nevertheless I am dying with the sense that I have acted in accordance with my convictions, with my conscience. Of course, others may judge about this better than I can. Perhaps . . . no, I think that I am right," he concluded. —From the "Life and Death of Drojzin," by E. POPOFF.

* * * * *

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand

against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Wherefore take up the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness."—EPHESIANS vi. 11-14.

"But how are we to act now—immediately among ourselves in Russia at this moment when our foes have already attacked us, are killing our people, and threatening us,—what should be the action," I shall be asked, "of a Russian soldier, officer, general, tsar, private individual? Are we, forsooth, to allow our enemies to ruin our possessions, to seize the productions of our labours, to carry away prisoners or kill our men? What are we to do now that this thing has begun?"

But before the work of war was commenced, by whomsoever it was commenced, every awakened man must answer—before all else the work of my life was commenced. And the work of my life has nothing in common with recognition of the rights of the Chinese, Japanese, or Russians to Port Arthur. The work of my life consists in fulfilling the will of Him Who sent me into this life. This will is known to me. This will is that I should love my neighbour and serve him. Then why should I, following temporary, casual, irrational, and cruel demands, deviate from the known eternal and changeless law of all my life? If there be a God, He will not ask me when I die (which may happen at any moment) whether I retained Chinnampo with its timber stores, or Port Arthur, or even that conglomeration which is called the Russian Empire, which He did not confide to my care; but He will ask me what I have done with that life which He put at my disposal; did I use it for the purpose for which it was predestined, and under the conditions for fulfilling

which it was entrusted to me? Have I fulfilled His law?

So that to this question as to what is to be done now, when war is commenced, for me, a man who understands his destination, whatever position I may occupy, there can be no other answer than this—whatever be my circumstances, whether the war be commenced or not, whether thousands of Russians or Japanese be killed, whether not only Port Arthur be taken, but St. Petersburg and Moscow—I cannot act otherwise than as God demands of me, and that therefore I as a man can, neither directly or indirectly, neither by organising nor by helping nor by inciting to it, participate in war; *I cannot, I do not wish to, and I will not.* What will happen immediately or soon, from my ceasing to do that which is contrary to the will of God, I do not and cannot know, but I believe that from the fulfilment of the will of God, there can follow nothing but that which is good for me and for all men.

You speak with horror about what might happen if we Russians at this moment ceased to fight, and surrendered to the Japanese what they desire from us.

But if it be true that the salvation of mankind from brutalisation and self-destruction lies only in the establishment amongst men of that true religion which demands that we should love our neighbour and serve him (with which it is impossible to disagree), then every war, every hour of war, and my participation in it, only renders more difficult and distant the realisation of this only possible salvation.

So that, even if one places one's self on the unstable point of view of defining actions according to their presumed consequences—even then the surrender to the Japanese by the Russians of all which the former desire of us, besides the unquestionable advantage of the cessation of ruin and

slaughter, would be an approach to the only means of the salvation of mankind from destruction, whereas the continuance of the war, however it may end, will be a postponement of that only means of salvation.

"Yet even if this be so," it is replied, "wars can cease only when all men—or the majority—will refuse to participate in them. But the refusal of one man, whether he be Tsar or soldier, would only unnecessarily, and without the slightest profit to anyone, ruin his life. If the Russian Tsar were now to throw up the war, he would be dethroned, perhaps killed, in order to get rid of him; if an ordinary man were to refuse military service he would be sent to a penal battalion and perhaps shot. Why, then, without the slightest use, should one throw away one's life, which may be profitable to society?" is the common question of those who do not think of the destination of their life, and therefore do not understand it.

But this is not what is said and felt by any man who understands the destination of his life, *i.e.*, by any religious man. Such a man is guided in his activity, not by the presumed possible consequences of his action, but by the consciousness of the destination of his life. A factory workman goes to his factory, and in it accomplishes the work which is allotted him without considering what will be the consequence of his labour. In the same way a soldier acts, carrying out the will of his commanders. So acts a religious man in fulfilling the work prescribed to him by God, without arguing as to what precisely will come of that work. Therefore, for a religious man there is no question as to whether many or few men act as he does, or of what may happen to him if he does that which he should do. He knows that, besides life and death, nothing can happen, and that life and death are in the hands of God Whom he obeys.

A religious man acts thus and not otherwise, not

because he desires to act thus, nor because it is advantageous to himself or to other men, but because, believing that his life is in the hands of God, he cannot act otherwise.

In this lies the distinction of the activity of religious men.

And therefore it is that the salvation of men from the calamities which they inflict upon themselves can be realised only in that degree in which they are guided in their lives, not by advantages nor arguments, but by religious consciousness.

CHAPTER X.

Men of God are that hidden salt which conserves the world, for the things of the world are conserved only inasmuch as the Divine salt does not lose its power. "Because if salt loses its savour with what can you salt it? It can serve neither for the earth nor for manure but it is thrown away. Who has ears to hear let him hear." As to us we are persecuted when God gives the tempter the power to persecute, but when He does not wish to submit us to sufferings we enjoy wonderful peace even in this world which hates us, and we rely upon the protection of Him who said: "Have confidence, I have conquered the world."

Celsus also says: "That it is impossible that all the inhabitants of Asia, Europe, and Libia, Greeks as well as barbarians, should agree to follow one and the same law. To think so, he says, means to understand nothing." But we say that not only is it possible but that the day will come when all reasonable beings shall unite under one law. For the Word or Reason will conquer all reasonable beings and will transform them into its own perfection.

There are bodily diseases and wounds which no doctoring can cure, but it is not so with the ailments of the soul; there is no evil the cure of which is impossible for Supreme Reason which is God.—ORIGEN ("Origen against Celsus").

* * * * *

I feel the force stirring within me which in time will reform the world.

It does not push or obtrude, but I am conscious of it drawing gently and irresistibly at my vitals.

And I see that as I am attracted, so I begin unaccountably to attract others.

I draw them and they in turn draw me, and we recognise a tendency to group ourselves anew.

Get in touch with the great central magnet, and you will yourself become a magnet.

And as more and more of us find our bearings and exert our powers, gradually the new world will take shape.

We become indeed legislators of the divine law, receiving it from God Himself in the Mount, and human laws shrink and dry up before us.

And I asked the force within my soul, "Who art thou?"

And it answered and said, "I am Love, the Lord of Heaven, and I would be called Love, the Lord of Earth.

I am the mightiest of all the heavenly hosts, and I am come to create the state that is to be."—ERNEST CROSBY ("Plain Talk in Psalm and Parable").

* * * * *

One can say with certainty that the kingdom of God has come to us when anywhere is found openly established the principle of the gradual transformation of the church faith into a universal rational religion, although the complete realisation of this kingdom still be infinitely far from us—because in this principle, as in the developing and then multiplying germ, is contained all which must enlighten and take possession of the world.

In the life of the universe a thousand years are as one day. We must labour patiently for this realisation and wait for it.—KANT.

* * * * *

When I speak to thee about God, do not think that I am speaking to thee about some object made of gold or silver. The God of whom I speak to thee, thou feelest Him in thy soul. Thou bearest Him in thyself, and by thy impure thoughts and loathsome acts thou defilest His image in thy soul. In the presence of a golden idol which thou regardest as God thou refrainest from doing aught that is unseemly, but in the presence of that God who in thee thyself sees and hears all, thou dost not even blush when thou addicest thyself to thy disgusting thoughts and actions.

If only we remembered that God in us is the witness of all that we do and think, we should cease to sin, and God would incessantly abide in us. Let us then remember God, and think and talk of Him as often as possible.—EPICURUS.

—

"But how about the enemies that attack us?"

"Love your enemies and ye will have none," is said in the teaching of the twelve Apostles. This answer is not merely words, as those may imagine who are accustomed to think that the recommendation of love to one's enemies is something hyperbolic, and signifies not that which is expressed, but something else. This answer is the indication of a

very clear and definite activity and of its consequences.

To love one's enemies—the Japanese, the Chinese, those Yellow peoples towards whom benighted men are now endeavouring to excite our hatred—to love them means not to kill them for the purpose of having the right of poisoning them with opium, as did the English; not to kill them in order to seize their land, as was done by the French, the Russians, and the Germans; not to bury them alive in punishment for injuring roads, not to tie them together by their hair, not to drown them in their river Amur, as did the Russians.

"A disciple is not above his master. . . . It is enough for a disciple that he be as his master."

To love the Yellow people, whom we call our foes, means, not to teach them under the name of Christianity absurd superstitions about the fall of man, redemption, resurrection, etc.; not to teach them the art of deceiving and killing others, but to teach them justice, unselfishness, compassion, love, and that not by words but by the example of our own good life.

And what have we been doing to them, and are still doing?

If we did indeed love our enemies, if even now we began to love our enemies the Japanese, we should have no enemy.

Therefore, however strange it may appear to those occupied with military plans, preparations, diplomatic considerations, administrative, financial, economical measures, revolutionary socialistic propaganda, and various unnecessary sciences, by which they think to save mankind from its calamities, the deliverance of man not only from the calamities of war, but also from all the calamities which men inflict upon themselves, will take place, not through emperors or kings instituting peace alliances, not through those who would dethrone emperors or kings, or restrain them by constitutions or substi-

tute republics for monarchies, not by peace conferences, not by the realisation of socialistic programmes, not by victories or defeats on land or sea, not by libraries or universities, nor by those futile mental exercises which are now called science; but only by there being more and more of those simple men who, like the Doukhobors, Drojzin, Olkhovik in Russia, the Nazarenes in Austria, Condattier in France, Terveij in Holland, and others, having placed as their object not external alterations of life, but the closest fulfilment in themselves of the will of Him who has sent them into life, will direct all their powers to this realisation. Only such people, realising the Kingdom of God in themselves, in their souls, will establish, without directly aiming at this purpose, that external Kingdom of God which every human soul is longing for.

Salvation will come to pass only in this one way and not in any other. Therefore what is now being done by those who, ruling men, inspire them with religious and patriotic superstitions, exciting in them exclusiveness, hatred, and murder, as well as by those who, for the purpose of freeing men from slavery and oppression, invoke them to violent external revolution, or who think that the acquisition by men of very much incidental and for the most part unnecessary information will of itself bring them to a good life; all this, by distracting men from what alone they need, only removes them further from the possibility of salvation.

The evil from which the men of the Christian world suffer is that they have temporarily lost religion.

Some people having come to see the discord between the existing religion and the degree of mental and scientific development attained by humanity at the present time, have decided that in general no religion whatever is necessary. They live without religion and preach the uselessness of any religion of whatever kind. Others, holding to that distorted

form of the Christian religion which is now preached, likewise live without religion, professing empty external forms, which cannot serve as guidance for men.

Yet a religion which answers to the demands of our time does exist and is known to all men, and in a latent state lives in the hearts of men of the Christian world. Therefore that this religion should become evident to and binding upon all men it is only necessary that educated men—the leaders of the masses—should understand that religion is necessary to man, that without religion men cannot live a good life, and that what they call science cannot replace religion; and that those in power and who support the old empty forms of religion should understand that what they support and preach under the form of religion is not only not religion but is the chief obstacle to men's appropriating the true religion which they already know, and which can alone deliver them from their calamities. So that the only certain means of man's salvation consists merely in ceasing to do that which hinders men from assimilating the true religion which already lives in their consciousness.

CHAPTER XI.

A wonderful and horrible thing is come to pass in the land; the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so; and what will ye do in the end thereof.—JEREMIAH v. 30, 31.

He hath blinded their eyes, and he hardened their heart; lest they should see with their eyes, and perceive with their heart, and should turn, and I should heal them.—JOHN xii., 40.

If a traveller were to see upon some far-off island a people whose houses were protected by loaded cannon, and if sentinels were patrolling night and day around these houses, he could not help thinking that brigands lived on the island. Is it not thus with European States? How little influence religion has upon people, or else, how far off we yet are from true religion?—Lichtenhagen.

I had finished this article when news came of the destruction of six hundred innocent lives opposite

Port Arthur. It would seem that the useless suffering and death of these unfortunate, deluded men, who have needlessly and so dreadfully perished, ought to disabuse those who were the cause of this destruction. I am not alluding to Makaroff and other officers; all these men knew what they were doing, and wherefore, and they voluntarily, for personal advantage, for ambition, did as they did, disguising themselves in pretended patriotism, a pretence not condemned merely because it is universal; I allude to those unfortunate men, drawn from all parts of Russia, who, by the heap of religious fraud, and under fear of punishment, have been torn from an honest, reasonable, useful, laborious family life, driven to the other end of the world, placed on a cruel, senseless machine for slaughter, and torn to bits, drowned along with this stupid machine in a distant sea, without any need or any possibility of advantage from all their privations, efforts, and sufferings, or from the death which overtook them.

In 1830, during the Polish war, the Adjutant Vilijinsky, sent to St. Petersburg by Klopitsky, in a conversation held in French with Dibitch, said to him, in answer to the latter's demand that the Russian troops should enter Poland:—

"Monsieur le Marechal, I think that in that case it will be quite impossible for the Polish nation to accept this manifesto. . . ."

"Believe me, the Emperor will make no further concessions."

"Then I foresee that unhappily there will be war, that much blood will be shed; there will be many unfortunate victims."

"Do not think so; at most there will be 10,000 who will perish on both sides, and that is all,"*

* Vilijinsky adds on his own behalf: The Field Marshal did not then think that more than 60,000 Russians alone would perish in this war, not so much from the enemy's fire as from disease—nor that he would himself be amongst their number.

said Dibitch, in his German accent, quite confident that ~~he~~, together with another man as cruel and foreign to Russian and Polish life as he was himself—Nicholas I.—had the right to condemn or not to condemn to death ten or a hundred thousand Russians and Poles.

One hardly believes that this could have been, so senseless and dreadful is it, and yet it was; 60,000 supporters of their families lost their lives owing to the will of these men. And now the same thing is taking place.

In order not to let the Japanese into Manchuria, and to expel them from Korea, not 10,000, but fifty and more thousands will, according to all probability, be necessary. I do not know whether Nicholas II. and Kuropatkin say like Dibitch in so many words that *not more than 50,000 lives* will be necessary for this on the Russian side alone, *and only that*; but they think it; they cannot but think it, because the work they are doing speaks for itself: that ceaseless stream of unfortunate, deluded Russian peasants now being transported by thousands to the Far East—these are those same *not more than 50,000* live Russian men whom Nicolas Romanoff and Alexis Kuropatkin have decided they may get killed, and who will be killed in support of those stupidities, robberies, and every kind of abomination which were accomplished in China and Korea by immoral, ambitious men now sitting peacefully in their palaces, and expecting new glory and new advantage and profit from the slaughter of these 50,000 unfortunate defrauded Russian working men, guilty of nothing and gaining nothing by their sufferings and death. For other peoples' land, to which the Russians have no right, which has been criminally seized from its legitimate owners, and which, in reality, is not even necessary to the Russians—and also for certain dark dealings by speculators, who in Korea wished to gain money out of other people's forests

—many millions of money are spent, i.e., a great part of the labour of the whole of the Russian people, while the future generations of this people are bound by debts, its best workmen are withdrawn from labour, and scores of thousands of its sons are mercilessly doomed to death, and the destruction of these unfortunate men is already begun. More than this: the war is being managed by those who have hatched it so badly, so negligently, all is so unexpected, so unprepared, that, as one paper admits, Russia's chief chance of success lies in the fact that it possesses inexhaustible human material, —it is upon this that rely those who send to death scores of thousands of Russian men!

It is frankly said that the regrettable reverses of our fleet must be compensated on the land. In plain language this means that if the authorities have badly directed things on sea, and by their negligence have destroyed not only the nation's milliards, but thousands of lives, we can make it up by condemning to death on land several more scores of thousands!

When crawling locusts cross rivers, it happens that the lower layers are drowned, until from the bodies of the drowned is formed a bridge over which the upper ranks can pass. In the same way are the Russian people disposed of.

Thus the first lower layer is already beginning to drown, indicating the way to other thousands, who will all likewise perish.

And are the originators, directors, and supporters of this dreadful work beginning to understand their sin, their crime? Not in the least. They are quite persuaded that they have fulfilled and are fulfilling their duty, and they are proud of their activity.

People speak of the loss of the brave Makaroff, who, as all agree, was able to kill men very cleverly, they deplore the loss of a drowned excellent machine of slaughter which had cost so many millions of

roubles, they discuss the question of how to find another murderer as capable as the poor benighted Makaroff, they invent new, still more efficacious tools of slaughter, and all the guilty men engaged in this dreadful work, from the Tsar to the humble journalist, all with one voice call for new insanities, new cruelties, for the increase of brutality and hatred of one's fellow-men.

"Makaroff is not the only man in Russia, and every admiral placed in his position will follow in his steps and will continue the plan and the idea of Makaroff, who has nobly perished in the strife," writes *Novoe Vremya*.

"Let us earnestly pray God for those who have laid down their lives for the sacred Fatherland, without doubting for one moment that it, the Fatherland, will give us new sons, equally virtuous, for the further struggle, and will find in them an inexhaustible store of strength for a worthy completion of the work," writes the St. Petersburg *Vedomosti*.

"A ripe nation will draw no other conclusion from the defeat, however unprecedented, than that we should continue, develop, and conclude the strife; therefore let us find in ourselves new strength; new heroes of the spirit will arise," writes the *Russ*; and so forth.

So murder and every kind of crime go on with greater fury. People enthusiastically admire the martial spirit of the volunteers, who, having come unexpectedly upon fifty of their fellow-men, slay all of them, or take possession of a village and slaughter all its population, or hang or shoot those accused of being spies, i.e., of doing the very same thing which is regarded as indispensable and is constantly done on our side. News about these crimes is reported in pompous telegrams to their chief director, the Tsar, who in return sends to his virtuous troops his blessing on the continuation of such deeds.

Is it not evident that if there be a salvation from this position, it is only one—that one which Jesus teaches?

“Seek ye first the Kingdom of God” and His righteousness (that which is within you), *and all the rest—i.e.*, all that practical welfare towards which man is striving—will of itself be realised.

Such is the law of life: practical welfare is attained not when man strives towards this practical welfare—such striving, on the contrary, for the most part removes man from the attainment of what he seeks—but only when man, without thinking of the attainment of practical welfare, strives towards the most perfect fulfilment of that which before God, before the Source and Law of his life, he regards as right. Then only, incidentally, is practical welfare also attained.

So that the true salvation of men is only one: the fulfilment of the will of God by each individual man within himself, *i.e.*, in that portion of the universe which alone is subject to his power. In this is the chief, the only destination of every individual man, and at the same time this is the only means by which every individual man can influence others, and therefore to this and to this only should all the efforts of every man be directed.

May 2, 1904.

CHAPTER XII.

I had only just despatched the last of the preceding pages of this article when the dreadful news came of a new iniquity committed in regard to the Russian people by those light-minded men who, craved with power, have appropriated the right of managing them. Again coarse and servile slaves of slaves, dressed up in various dazzling attires—varieties of

Generals wishing to distinguish themselves or to do a bad turn to each other, or to earn the right to add one more little star, fingle-fangle, or scrap of ribbon to their idiotic and glaring get-up, or else from stupidity or carelessness—again these miserable worthless men have destroyed amid dreadful sufferings thousands of those honourable, kind, hard-working labourers who feed them. And again, this iniquity not only does not cause those responsible for it to reflect and repent, but one hears and reads only about its being necessary as speedily as possible to mutilate and slaughter a greater number of men and to ruin still more families, both Russian and Japanese.

More than this, to prepare men for fresh iniquities of this kind, the perpetrators of these crimes, far from recognising what is evident to all, viz., that for the Russians this event, even from their patriotic military point of view, was a scandalous defeat, endeavour to assure credulous people that these unfortunate Russian labouring men, lured into a trap like cattle into a slaughter-house—of whom several thousands have been killed and maimed merely because one General did not understand what another General had said—have performed an act of heroism because those who could not run away were killed and those who did run away remained alive. As to the fact that one of these terrible, immoral, and cruel men distinguished by the titles of Generals, Admirals, drowned a number of peaceful Japanese, this is also described as a great and glorious act of heroism, which must gladden the hearts of Russians. And in all the papers is reprinted this awful appeal to murder:—

“Let the two thousand Russian soldiers killed on the Yalu, together with the maimed ‘Retvisan’ and her fellow-ships, with our lost torpedo boats, teach our cruisers with what devastation they must break in upon the shores of base Japan. She has sent her soldiers to shed Russian blood, and no quarter

should be afforded her. Now one cannot be sentimental, it is sinful; we must fight, we must direct such heavy blows that the memory of them shall freeze the treacherous hearts of the Japanese. Now is the time for the cruisers to go out to sea, to reduce to ashes the towns of Japan, flying as a dreadful calamity, along its beautiful shores. No more sentimentality."

The frightful work commenced goes on. Loot, violence, murder, hypocrisy, theft, and above all, the most fearful fraud, the distortion of religious teachings, both Christian and Buddhistic, proceed apace.

The Tsar, the chief responsible person, continues to go on to review the troops, to thank, reward, and encourage them; he issues an edict for the calling out of the reserves; his faithful subjects again and again lay down their property and lives at the feet of him they call, only with their lips, their adored monarch,—on the other hand, desiring to distinguish themselves before each other in deeds and not in words only, they tear away the fathers and the bread-winners from their orphaned families, preparing them for slaughter. The worse the position of Russia, the more recklessly do the journalists lie, transforming shameful defeats into victories, knowing that no one will contradict them, and they quietly collect money from subscriptions and sales. The more money and labour of the people is devoted to the war, the more is grabbed by various authorities and speculators who know that no one will convict them because everyone is doing the same. The military, trained for murder, having passed years in a school of inhumanity, coarseness, and idleness, rejoice—poor men—because besides an increase of their salary the slaughter of superiors opens vacancies for their promotion. Christian pastors continue to invite men to the greatest of crimes, continue to commit sacrilege, praying God to help the work of war, and, instead of condemning, they

justify and praise that pastor who with the cross in his hands on the very scene of murder, encouraged men to the crime. The same thing is going on in Japan. The benighted Japanese go in for murder with yet greater fervour owing to their victories, the Mikado also reviews and rewards his troops, various Generals boast of their bravery, imagining that, having learned to kill, they have acquired enlightenment. So, too, groan the unfortunate working people torn from useful labour and from their families. So the journalists lie and rejoice over their gains. Also probably (for where murder is elevated into virtue every kind of vice is bound to flourish), also probably all kinds of commanders and speculators earn money, and Japanese theologians and religious teachers,—no less than the military in the techniques of armament,—do not remain behind the Europeans in the techniques of religious deceit and sacrilege, but distort the great Buddhistic teaching by not only permitting but justifying that murder which Buddha forbade. The Buddhistic scientist Soyen-Shaku, ruling over eight hundred monasteries, explains that although Buddha forbade manslaughter* he also said he could never be at peace until all beings are united in the infinitely loving heart of all things, and that therefore, in order to bring into harmony that which is discordant, it is necessary to fight and to kill men.*

It is as if there never had existed the Christian

* In the article it is said:—

"This triple world is my own possession. All the things therein are my own children . . . the ten thousand things in this world are no more than the reflections of my own self. They come from the one source. They partake of the one body. Therefore I cannot rest quiet until every being, even the smallest possible fragment of existence, is settled down to its proper appointment." . . . This is the position taken by the Buddha, and we, his humble followers, are but to walk in his wake.

"Why then do we fight at all?

"Because we do not find this world as it ought to be. Because there are here so many perverted creatures, so many

and Buddhistic teaching about the unity of the human spirit, the brotherhood of men, love, compassion, the sacredness of human life. Men, both Japanese and Russians, already enlightened by the Truth, yet like wild animals—nay, worse than wild animals—throw themselves upon each other with the sole desire to destroy as many lives as possible. Thousands of unfortunates groan and writhe in cruel sufferings and die in agony in Japanese and Russian field hospitals, asking themselves in bewilderment why this fearful thing was done with them; while other thousands are already rotting in the earth or on the earth, or floating in the sea in swollen decomposition. And scores of thousands of wives, fathers, mothers, children, are bemoaning their bread-winners, uselessly destroyed. Yet all this is still too little; new and newer victims are being prepared. The chief concern of the Russian organisers of slaughter is that on the Russian side the stream of food for cannon—three thousand men per day doomed to destruction—should not be interrupted for one minute. The Japanese are preoccupied with the same thing. The locusts are incessantly being driven down into the river in order that the rows behind may pass over the bodies.

When will this cease, and the deceived people at

wayward thoughts, so many ill-directed hearts, due to ignorant subjectivity. For this reason Buddhists are never tired of combatting all productions of ignorance, and their fight must be *to the bitter end*. *They will show no quarter*. They will mercilessly destroy the very root from which arises the misery of this life. To accomplish this end they will never be afraid of sacrificing their lives.

These follow, just as is usual with us, entangled arguments about self-sacrifice and kindness, about the transmigration of souls and about much else—all this for the sole purpose of concealing the simple and clear commandment of Buddha: not to kill.

Further it is said: "The hand that is raised to strike and the eye that is fixed to take aim, do not belong to the individual, but are the instruments utilised by a principle higher than transient existence." ("The Open Court," May, 1904.—"Buddhist Views of War," by the Right Rev. Soyen-Shaku.)

last recover themselves and say: "Well, go you yourselves, you heartless and Godless Tsars, Mikados, Ministers, Bishops, Priests, Generals, Editors, Speculators, or however you may be called, go you yourselves under these shells and bullets, but we do not wish to go and we will not go. Leave us in peace, to plough and sow and build, and also feed you, you parasites." It would be so natural to say this, now, when amongst us in Russia resounds the weeping and wailing of hundreds of thousands of mothers, wives, and children, from whom are being snatched away their bread-earners, the so-called "reserve." These same men, the majority of the reserve, are able to read; they know what the Far East is; they know that war is going on, not for anything which is in the least necessary to Russia, but for some dealings in strange lands, "leased" lands, as they themselves call them, on which it seemed advantageous to some corrupt speculators to build railways and so gain profit; also they know, or might know, that they will be killed like sheep in a slaughter-house, since the Japanese possess the latest improvements in tools of murder which we do not, as the Russian authorities who are sending these people to death had not thought in time of furnishing itself with the same weapons as the Japanese. Knowing all this, it would indeed be so natural to say: "Go you, those who have brought on this work, all you to whom war is necessary and who justify it, go you and face the Japanese bullets and mines, but we will not go, because we not only do not need to do this, but we cannot understand how it can be necessary to anyone."

But no, they do not say this; they go, and they will continue to go; they cannot but go as long as they fear that which ruins the body and not that which ruins both the body and the soul.

"Whether we shall be killed," they argue, "or maimed in these Chinnampos, or whatever they are

called, whither we are driven, we do not know, it may happen that we shall get through safely, and, moreover, with rewards and glory like those sailors who are now being feasted all over Russia because the Japanese bombs and bullets did not hit them but somebody else; whereas should we refuse, we should be certainly sent to prison, starved, beaten, exiled to the province of Yakoutsch, perhaps even killed immediately." So with despair in their hearts, leaving behind a good rational life, leaving their wives and their children, they go.

Yesterday I met a reservist soldier, accompanied by his mother and wife. All three were riding in a cart, he had had a drop too much, his wife's face was swollen with tears. He turned to me:

"Good-bye to thee, Lyof Nikolaevitch; off to the Far East."

"Well, art thou going to fight?"

"Well, some one has to fight!"

"No one need fight!"

He reflected for a moment. "But what is one to do. *Where can one escape?*"

I saw that he had understood me, had understood that the work to which he was being sent was an evil work.

"*Where can one escape?*" That is the precise expression of that mental condition which in the official and journalistic world is translated into the words, "For the Faith, the Tsar, and the Fatherland." Those who, abandoning their hungry families, go to suffering, to death, say as they feel: "*Where can one escape?*" Whereas those who sit in safety in their luxurious palaces say that all Russian men are ready to sacrifice their lives for their adored monarch and for the glory and greatness of Russia.

Yesterday from a peasant I know I received two letters, one after the other.

This is the first:—

"Dear Lyof Nikolaevitch,—Well, to-day I have

received the official announcement of my call to the Service; to-morrow I must present myself at the headquarters. That is all. And after that—to the Far East to meet the Japanese bullets.

"About my own, and my household's grief, I will not tell you, it is not you who will fail to understand all the horror of my position and the horrors of war, all this you have long ago painfully realised, and you understand it all. How I have longed to visit you to have a talk with you. I had written to you a long letter in which I described the torments of my soul, but I had not had time to copy it when I received my summons. What is my wife to do now with her four children? As an old man, of course, you cannot do anything yourself for my folks, but you might ask some of your friends in their leisure to visit my orphaned family. I beg you earnestly that if my wife proves unable to bear the agony of her helplessness with her burden of children, and makes up her mind to go to you for help and counsel, you will receive and console her. Although she does not know you personally, she believes in your word, and that means much.

"I was not able to resist the summons, but I say beforehand that through me not one Japanese family shall be orphaned. My God! how dreadful is all this; how distressing and painful to abandon all by which one lives, and in which one is concerned."

The second letter is as follows:—

"Kindest Lyof Nikolaevitch,—Only one day of actual service has passed, and I have already lived through an eternity of most desperate torments. From eight o'clock in the morning till nine in the evening we have been crowded and knocked about to and fro in the barrack-yard, like a herd of cattle, the coshedy of medical examination was three times repeated, and those who had reported themselves ill did not receive even ten minutes' atten-

tion before they were marked 'Satisfactory.' When we, these two thousand satisfactory individuals, were driven from the military commander to the barracks, along the road, spread out for almost a verst, stood a crowd of relatives, mothers, and wives, with infants in arms, and if you had only heard and seen how they clasped their fathers, husbands, sons, and hanging round their necks wailed hopelessly! Generally I behave in a reserved way, and can restrain my feelings, but I could not hold out, and I also wept." (In journalistic language this same is expressed thus: "The upheaval of patriotic feeling is immense.")

"Where is the standard that can measure all this immensity of woe now spreading itself over almost one-third of the world? and we, we are now that food for cannon which in the near future will be offered as sacrifice to the God of vengeance and horror. . . .

"I cannot manage to establish my inner balance. Oh! how I execrate myself for this double-mindedness, which prevents my serving one Master and God."

This man does not yet sufficiently believe that what destroys the body is not dreadful, but that which destroys both the body and the soul, therefore he cannot refuse to go, yet while leaving his own family, he promises beforehand that through him not one Japanese family shall be orphaned; he believes in the chief law of God, the law of all religions; to act towards others as one wishes others to act towards one's self. Of such men, more or less consciously recognising this law, there are in our time, not in the Christian world alone, but in the Buddhistic, Mohammedan, Confucian, and Brahminic world, not only thousands, but millions.

There exist true heroes, not those who are now being feted because having wished to kill others they were not killed themselves, but true heroes

who are now confined in prisons and in the province of Yakoutsck, for having categorically refused to enter the ranks of murderers, and who have preferred martyrdom to this departure from the law of Jesus. There are also such as he who writes to me, who go, but who will not kill. But also that majority which goes without thinking, and endeavours not to think of what it is doing, still in the depth of its soul does now already feel that it is doing an evil deed by obeying authorities who tear men from labour and from their families, and send them to needless slaughter of men, repugnant to their soul and their faith; and they go only because they are so entangled on all sides that:—
"Where can one escape?"

Meanwhile those who remain at home not only feel this, but know and express it. Yesterday in the high road I met some peasants returning from Toula. One of them was reading a leaflet as he walked by the side of his cart.

I asked, "What is that—a telegram?"

"This is yesterday's, but here is one of to-day."

He took another out of his pocket. We stopped. I read it.

"You should have seen what took place yesterday at the station," he said; "it was dreadful."

"Wives, children, more than a thousand of them, weeping. They surrounded the train, but were allowed no further. Strangers wept, looking on. One woman from Toula gasped and fell down dead; five children. They have since been placed in various institutions, but the father was driven away all the same. . . . What do we want with this Manchuria, or whatever it is called. There is sufficient land here. And what a lot of people and property have been destroyed."

Yes, the relation of men to war is now quite different from that which formerly existed, even so lately as the year '77. That which is now taking place never took place before.

The papers set forth that during the reception of the Tsar, who is travelling about Russia for the purpose of hypnotising these men who are being sent to murder, indescribable enthusiasm is manifested amongst the people. As a matter of fact, something quite different is being manifested. From all sides one hears reports that in one place three Reservists have hanged themselves; in another spot two more; in yet another, about a woman whose husband had been taken away bringing her children to the conscription committee-room, and leaving them there; while another hanged herself in the yard of the military commander. All are dissatisfied, gloomy, exasperated. The words, "For the Faith, the King, and the Fatherland," the national anthem, and shouts of "Hurrah!" no longer act upon people as they once did. Another warfare of a different kind, the struggling consciousness of the deceit and sinfulness of the work to which people are being called, is more and more taking possession of the people.

Yes, the great strife of our time is not that now taking place between the Japanese and the Russians, nor that which may blaze up between the White and Yellow races, not that strife which is carried on by mines, bombs, bullets, but that spiritual strife, which, without ceasing, has gone on and is now going on between the enlightened consciousness of mankind now waiting for manifestation and that darkness and that burden which surrounds and oppresses mankind.

In his own time, Jesus yearned in expectation and said: "I came to cast fire upon the earth, and how I wish that it were already kindled."—Luke xii., 49.

That which Jesus longed for is being accomplished; the fire is being kindled. Then do not let us check it, but let us spread and serve it.

May 13, 1904.

I should never finish this article if I were to continue to add to it all that corroborates its essential idea. Yesterday the news came in of the sinking of the Japanese ironclads, and in the so-called higher circles of Russian fashionable, rich, intellectual society, they are, without the slightest conscientious scruples, rejoicing at the destruction of a thousand human lives. Yet to-day I have received from a simple seaman, a man standing on the lowest plane of society, the following letter:—*

"Letter from sailor (there follows his Christian name, father's name and surname).

"Much respected Lyof Nikolaevitch, I greet you with a low bow, with love, much respected Lyof Nikolaevitch.

"I have read your book. It was very pleasant reading for me. I have been a great lover of reading your works. Well, Lyof Nikolaevitch, we are now in a state of war, please write to me whether it is agreeable to God or not that our commanders compel us to kill. I beg you, Lyof Nikolaevitch, write to me, please, whether or not the truth now exists on earth. Tell me, Lyof Nikolaevitch. In church here a prayer is being read, the priest mentions the Christ-loving army. Is it true or not that God loves war? I pray you, Lyof Nikolaevitch, have you got any books from which I could see whether truth exists on earth or not? Send me such books. What they cost, I will pay. I beg you, Lyof Nikolaevitch, do not neglect my request. If there are no books, then send me a letter. I will be very glad when I receive a letter from you. I will await your letter with impatience. Good-bye for the present. I remain alive and well and wish the same to you from the Lord God. Good health and good success in your work."

There follows the address, Port Arthur, the name

* The letter is written in a most illiterate way, filled with mistakes in orthography and punctuation.—*Trans.*

of the ship on which the correspondent serves, his rank, and his name. In a direct way, in words, I cannot answer this dear, serious, and truly enlightened man. He is in Port Arthur, with which there no longer is any communication either by letter or telegraph. But we still have a mutual means of communication. This means is in that God in whom we both believe and concerning whom we both know that war is not according to His will. The doubt which has arisen in his soul contains at the same time its own solution.

And this doubt has now arisen and is living in the souls of thousands and thousands of men, not only Russians and not only Japanese, but all those unfortunate people who are compelled by violence to fulfil the act most repellant to human nature.

The hypnotism by which people have been stupefied and by which governments still endeavour to stupefy them soon passes off, and its effect is becoming weaker and weaker; whereas the doubt as to "*whether or not it be agreeable to God that our commanders compel us to kill*" grows stronger and stronger—cannot in any way be extinguished, and keeps spreading further and further.

The doubt as to "*whether or not it be agreeable to God that our commanders compel us to kill*"—this is a spark of that fire which Jesus kindled upon earth and which is beginning to spread. To know and feel this is a great joy.

'LEO TOLSTOY.

YASNAYA POLIANA,

May 21, 1904.

